

**PA STATE LEGISLATIVE 2022 QUESTIONNAIRE  
FOR PHILLY NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORKS**

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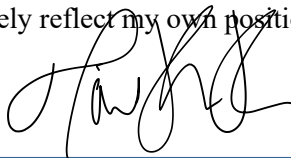
**CANDIDATE CERTIFICATION**

Candidate Name: Tarik Khan

Office Sought: State Representative, 194

I have read the attached questionnaire responses and certify that the information provided is accurate and the opinions stated accurately reflect my own positions.

Candidate Signature:



Date: 2/16/22

**Please complete, sign and return this form via Email to:**

**Gloria Gilman: [gmgilman@gmail.com](mailto:gmgilman@gmail.com)**

**and**

**Stan Shapiro: [shapsj@comcast.net](mailto:shapsj@comcast.net)**

**BACKGROUND** Please note: answers to questions 7–9 are optional.

**1. What, if any, elected or appointed government office(s) have you held?**

I have run for the Democratic city committee and have served as committee person in Philadelphia's 21st, 59th, and 63rd wards. This is my first time running for State House, and I am running in the 194th district.

**2. If you have previously held a government office:**

**a. What are the primary issue areas in which you were involved?**

As a committee person, I helped engage neighbors around turnout for primary and general elections.

**b. What committees, caucuses or working groups have you served on?**

I have served on the executive board of the 63rd ward.

**3. If you have not previously held a government office, what community or policy issues have you worked on, and in what capacity? (Please provide the names of two or three individuals who can provide information about your previous work.)**

As Vice-President and President of the Pennsylvania State Nurses Association (PSNA), I worked to bring the statewide organization on the same safe staffing bill as SEIU Healthcare, PASNAP, and Nurses of PA. The bill establishes minimum safe staffing standards in hospitals and keeps both nurses and patients safe. I hosted the press conference that introduced this historic, bipartisan safe staffing legislation in the state legislature last year, and the majority of the house members cosponsor this bill. I worked on this critical health policy issue alongside Jarret Smith of SEIU Healthcare and Maureen May of PASNAP.

I also fought the Nicetown Gas Plant, which brought a toxic fossil fuel burning power plant to the Nicetown community, just a few blocks from the 194th district and within a one-mile radius of thousands of children and families. I was active in this fight, including giving speeches at rallies, joining neighbors at meetings to protest the permit at the L&I review board, and writing an OpEd to educate residents and stakeholders about this instance of environmental racism. A link to this OpEd, and two other OpEds that I wrote about police brutality and corporate greed can be found [here](#).

**4. Please provide copies of all your significant campaign materials, including position papers, advertisement copy, and flyers.**

Our website covers many of our positions on issues which is [www.tarikforpa.com](http://www.tarikforpa.com) and we will attach a two-page document that we send to stakeholders that discusses our path forward to victory.

**5. What, if any, endorsements have you received? What others are you seeking?**

We are building a broad coalition that includes progressive organizations, elected officials, and labor unions. We have been endorsed by *Reclaim Philadelphia*, *PASNAP*, *The Philadelphia Metal Trades Council*, *Iron Workers Local 401*, *IUPAT 21*, *Operating Engineers 542*, *EMGAGE PAC*, *Second Generation PAC*, *PSNA*, *Indian American Impact* and *314 Action*. We are seeking the endorsement of other unions and other progressive organizations like WFP.

**6. What is your plan to win this race, including your fundraising goals and strategies.**

We have a three-pronged strategy to win that includes fundraising, endorsements, and voter engagement through door-knocking and other community events. We have fundraised nearly \$180,000 already, and in 2021 we raised 17 times the incumbent's amount raised for their 2021 reporting period. We will have the necessary resources to run a successful campaign, including the financial and volunteer support that a winning campaign needs. We believe we will be uniquely positioned to reach the entire 194th, particularly new voters in the district that do not know the incumbent (which make up over a quarter of the new 194th district). I plan to personally knock on over 10,000 doors (I knocked on over 3,500 doors in the last three months) alone, and we will combine a strategy of digital and mail communications.

**7. What, if any, genders, do you identify with?**

I am a cis-gendered male, and I use he/him pronouns.

**8. What is your sexual orientation?**

Heterosexual.

**9. What is your racial, ethnic identity?**

Pakistani American and Muslim American.

**ISSUES**

**Please note: Although many of the following questions may be answered “yes” or “no” you should feel free to elaborate if doing so would provide a clearer statement of your position. If you believe you do not have enough information to answer a question, or have not formed an opinion, please say so.**

**I. OVERALL**

**What would be your three highest priorities as a legislator? Explain.**

**Workers' Rights and Fair Wage for Work** – I treat many patients who work long and stressful hours and in jobs that do not pay them enough to adequately provide housing, food, medical costs, and leisure for themselves and their families. I will co-sponsor and fight for the passage of the Minimum Wage Act (HB 15), which will raise the current poverty minimum wage in

Pennsylvania workers to a living wage of \$15 per hour. I also support a worker's right to organize in the workplace and will fight alongside unions to ensure workers are treated with dignity and respect.

**Quality Education for All**– Many of our children in Philadelphia and across PA receive their education in overcrowded classrooms in toxic schools with lead, mold, and asbestos. Meanwhile, PA taxpayers spend hundreds of millions a year on underperforming charter schools that bleed money from our already underfunded public school system. I will support legislation to ensure that schools are fairly and fully funded, class sizes are limited, teachers get the pay they deserve, students have access to an on-site nurse, librarian, and psychologist. I would also support legislation that is stopping the privatization of our schools, including a state-wide moratorium on new charter schools.

**Quality Health Care for All and Protections for Patients and Staff**– Safe staffing has been the top issue for our frontline nurses for decades since it leads to decreased patient deaths, nursing injuries, and costs. Unfortunately, administrators and some legislators oppose common sense, evidence-based solutions. I will co-sponsor and lead the passage of the Patient Safety Act (HB 106/ SB 240), a bill I helped write in a historic collaboration with nursing unions and professional nursing organizations. The Patient Safety Act will establish minimum safe staffing standards for nurses working on the frontlines in hospitals across the state. Additionally, I believe that healthcare is a human right, and I support a Medicare-for-all system to ensure all people receive quality healthcare regardless of their income.

## II. Education

### 1) Do you believe public college, or community college, should be tuition-free?

Yes, I believe no student should have to take on debt in order to receive an education.

### 2) What role do you believe standardized tests should play in evaluating teachers, schools and students, if any?

I do not see standardized tests as an effective tool for evaluating students or teachers. These tests are often biased and favor one sect of the population over another.

### 3) What factors do you believe should be considered in determining overall levels of school funding in the Commonwealth, and funding per school district?

I am a proud product of Philadelphia public schools – from kindergarten at Greenberg through graduation from Central High School. Having had the opportunity to attend two of the best public schools in the city, I feel that every student should have the same opportunity to get the high-quality education that I did, regardless of where they grew up. That is why one of my biggest budget priorities will be to fight to fully fund our public schools with a *fair funding formula*. I believe that school funding should be based on need and prioritize equity and fairness across the state, rather than based on local property taxes.

- 4) Approximately 33% of Philadelphia students are enrolled in charter schools. What is your position on the expansion of charter schools? Should they be given public money via vouchers or similar programs (like ESAs)? What role do you think public schools play in our city?**

Unlike my opponent, who supports charter schools for “providing needed alternatives to poor public schools” and has previously declined to rule out privatization of public schools, I believe charters are part of the problem of our students receiving high-quality education. I oppose the creation of new charter schools and vouchers like educational tax credits for private schools. Vouchers have not proven to improve educational outcomes for students, have been used to sidestep integrating/diversifying schools, and most importantly, they deplete funding for public education. I support instead investing in rebuilding our public schools while simultaneously expanding the entire scale of resources our public schools can offer to our students, teachers, and communities.

### **III. Budget and Taxes**

- 1) Do you support a Constitutional Amendment to permit progressive taxation in PA, in whole or part?**

Yes, I support a Constitutional Amendment that would allow for a progressive tax system that would force corporations and the wealthy to pay their fair share of taxes.

- 2) What changes if any would you support in the corporate net income tax levels? See this: <https://krc-pbpc.org/issues/corporate-income-taxes/>**

I support increasing the corporate net income tax levels, which have declined over the past decade. We need to tax corporations more and use that money to fund our city – through infrastructure, schools, and other various forms of public investment.

- 3) What changes, if any, would you support in the personal income tax?**

I would fight to lower the personal income tax on individuals and instead raise corporate and passive income tax rates.

- 4) Do you support the [Fair Share Tax Plan](#) proposed by the PA Budget and Policy Center, with its emphasis on raising the tax rate on unearned income?**

I absolutely support the “Fair Share Tax Plan” and would fight alongside those who put forth this legislation to get it passed. This legislation would decrease the personal income tax from 3.07% to 2.8% while increasing the percentage of tax that is paid on passive income, such as through stocks, patents, and royalties. This bill would either decrease taxes or have no effect on 85% of Philadelphians.

- 5) Do you support full elimination of the Delaware loophole?**

Yes.

**6) Do you support a tax on fracking, and at what level?**

I support a heavy tax on fracking and all fossil fuel industries in our state, and oppose new fracking projects.

**7) Do you support the Keystone Opportunity Zone program? Would you introduce legislation to eliminate it, or to limit the number of times a parcel's KOZ designation can be renewed or extended? More generally, do you support tax breaks to lure or retain businesses?**

To me, the role of the government is to help create and fund programs that support our communities and give every individual the chance to thrive. I do not see giving tax breaks to the rich, or tax abatements to developers as the way to support our communities.

**IV. Public Banking**

**Would you support the creation of a Pennsylvania Public Bank, modeled after the Bank of North Dakota, and/or the creation of local public banks in PA cities and counties?**

Yes.

**V. Women's Rights**

**1) Do you believe there should be any restrictions on a woman's right to choose? If so, what?**

There should be absolutely no restrictions on a woman's right to choose. I believe every person should have access to proper contraception and safe abortions. I support comprehensive access to contraception and abortion services as a fundamental issue of gender equality and reproductive justice.

**2) What additional protections should be enacted into law to protect women's health care in light of the pending decision by the U.S. Supreme Court to override or sharply curtail Roe v. Wade?**

As a nurse, I firmly believe that the right to make reproductive choices is a matter left to the person and should remain between the person and their health care provider. And, as the son of a nurse who had patients die due to botched abortions before Roe v. Wade, I would immediately work to reinstate the right of people to make reproductive choices should Roe v. Wade be impacted by SCOTUS. I believe we must fight to pass the Equality Act, which would ensure protections for people regardless of gender, race, or sexual orientation in the workplace, which is where many Americans receive their insurance coverage.

**3) Would you support proposals to ensure that women and men working in the Commonwealth receive equal pay for equal work?**

Yes.

## **VI. Children and Families**

### **1) Should the state require businesses to provide paid family leave?**

Yes, I fundamentally believe in the importance and necessity of paid leave.

### **2) Should the state provide universal availability of affordable childcare? If yes, how would you achieve this?**

Currently, Pennsylvania offers woefully inadequate subsidies for childcare and has a minimal subsidized pre-K program. (I worked with Patty Eakin from PASNAP to fight for the passage of universal pre-K in Philadelphia in 2015 and 2016). The lack of substantially subsidized childcare hits working people hardest, especially as people return to in-person work. I believe that our state – and our nation – should have free childcare for all. To get there, I support the creation of a comprehensive universal early childcare program, as well as an education social insurance program. This program would make all childcare universally available from as early as 12 weeks, regardless of parent/guardian employment status.

## **VII. Environment**

### **1) Do you support a ban on fracking in whole or part? Explain.**

I support a ban against all new fracking projects. We need to get to carbon neutral to achieve our climate goals and provide a livable planet for future generations. To do so, we need to transition to renewables over time, instead of relying on natural gas and other extractive fossil fuels.

### **2) Would you support banning the use of single-use plastic bags?**

Yes.

### **3) Do you think Philadelphia should be compelled or induced to sell PGW?**

No. Philadelphia should not be compelled or induced to sell PGW. We cannot privatize our water and gas systems, as we should not entrust our public utilities to private, profit-driven companies. Instead, I believe water and gas systems should be under local government jurisdiction and control.

### **4) What measures would you support to move PA off its reliance on fossil fuels and expand use of renewable energy sources?**

I absolutely support a Green New Deal (GND) for Pennsylvania. I believe our city – and our state – are at a tipping point – facing the overlapping crises of global warming, public disinvestment, and economic inequality. Our infrastructure is ill-prepared for the effects of our climate crisis, as we saw recently with Hurricane Ida and the historic flooding of Manayunk's Main Street, Ridge Avenue in East Falls, and beyond. The future of our environment affects all of us – and no one

more so than frontline and working-class communities. The Green New Deal must be bold and demand a transformative approach to the climate crisis.

**5) What criteria would you use in making appointments to the P.U.C.?**

I would work to shift the P.U.C. away from judging utilities on their profitability and towards a model that considers more what matters to everyday citizens – such as decarbonization and public health. I would prioritize people who share these values rather than those who are aligned with corporations when making appointments.

**6) What steps would you take to ensure environmental justice in the placement and remediation of structures that pollute?**

I would demand that every toxic site in Philadelphia caused by the fossil fuel industry be cleaned up and fight for increased funding for community green space and urban farms, which can be used as centers to foster and feed communities. We must work with unions so that these new green jobs are stable, good union jobs that uplift our community. We must also fight for a Civilian Climate Corps that will provide employment and protect our most vulnerable communities from the ravages of our climate crisis.

**7) What, if any, other measures would you support to preserve or improve our environment? (water issues, park preservation, detoxification of school buildings, etc.)**

I would be in support of all measures that seek to prioritize the expansion of public goods – such as fixing our water lines so no homes go without access to clean running water, expanding and renovating parks and green spaces, detoxifying and modernizing our schools, and expanding access to public transportation across the city.

## **VIII. Criminal Justice**

**1) Should stop and frisk be limited or outlawed?**

Stop and frisk should be outlawed.

**2) How would you deal with the problem of mass incarceration of minorities, particularly minority youth?**

I would focus on prevention and diversion programs rather than persecution. This means investing in our communities from the onset – such as through better schools and afterschool programs, as well as in community centers that provide safe spaces for youth to learn and grow.

I believe that anyone – including and especially young people – charged with a drug offense should have easy access to mental health resources and social work support. Such interventions would, for example, allow people to discuss with mental health therapists and clinicians the root causes and trauma behind their offenses and/or addictions and assist their road to recovery. I



believe these resources would not only have individual benefits for these individuals but would also work to stop recidivism.

**3) Should marijuana be fully legalized?**

Yes, it should be, and I would fight to legalize marijuana and decriminalize other illegal substances. For too long, we have considered substance addiction as criminal. As a nurse I know that addiction is a public health issue. I would fight to treat drug dependence as such instead of a criminal matter.

**4) Should privately-owned prisons be permitted in Pennsylvania?**

No privately- owned prisons should not be permitted in our Commonwealth . No prison should be driven by profit.

**5) Should we ban the box in Pennsylvania?**

Yes. The box is clearly a discrimination tactic that creates clear barriers for ex-offenders successful reentry.

**6) Should PA continue to build new prisons?**

No. W

**7) Should PA begin to close prisons? Explain.**

Yes, I believe we PA should immediately start to close all private prisons while working to shrink the ever-growing prison population.

**8) Do you support an end to the death penalty?**

Yes, we must abolish the death penalty!

**9) When if ever, should a juvenile be tried as an adult?**

A juvenile should never be tried as an adult.

**10)As a general matter, what do you think the state can do to reduce the murder rate in Philadelphia, while maintaining respect for civil liberties and the overall need for decarceration of our city?**

As a nurse, I believe strongly in prevention, and too little has been done to address the social determinants that contribute to violent crime. With the uptick of murders, it's never been more

clear that we need adequate investments in education, housing, or our public health infrastructure– including addressing the mental health needs of our community. I will be a champion in the legislature fighting to bring a \$15 minimum wage, fair funding for education including more afterschool and summer jobs for kids, more community recreation and green spaces, affordable healthcare access, including access to mental health resources like counselors and mental health providers. We also need to continue a relentless push for police and criminal justice reform to establish trust and confidence in systems supporting communities, not terrorizing and repressing them. As I mentioned briefly above, I believe that substance abuse should be treated like the medical issue and not a legal matter. Anyone charged with a drug offense should have easy access to mental health resources and social work support. Such interventions could, for example, allow people to discuss with mental health therapists and clinicians and better understand the root causes and trauma behind their offenses and/or addictions and assist their road to recovery. I believe these reforms would both benefit individuals and would work to reduce recidivism significantly.

## **IX. Campaign Finance Reform**

**Would you support legislation to provide public financing for state and local election campaigns?**

Yes. I would also support limiting annual donations from individuals and PACs for candidates for state elections.

## **X. Labor**

**1) Would you support legislation to strengthen protections for workers trying to form or join a union?**

Yes. Philly is a union town, and unions have been the backbone of our city's working and middle class. When unions have more power, workers see higher wages and safer working conditions. I have seen this firsthand in my career and have taken action to secure better working conditions for nurses in PA. As noted, as a President of the Pennsylvania State Nurses Association (PSNA), I helped lead efforts to bring nursing unions and professional nursing associations together on a comprehensive safe staffing bill benefiting patients and nurses. As State Representative, I will continue to fight alongside unions to support working people as I did with the Patient Safety Act. And I will always support workers fighting to form unions in their workplace and fight so that all workers can have the right to unionize without retaliation.

**2) Should the minimum wage be increased? If so, to what level and should the increase be indexed to inflation?**

Yes, the minimum wage should be increased. As the cost of living (and currently with the rising inflation happening) continues to go up, we must have a minimum wage that is actually a liveable wage, which is at the bare minimum of \$15/hr. I support and will advocate for legislation that links the minimum wage with the cost of living.

- 3) Do you believe that Philadelphia and other municipalities should continue to be pre-empted from increasing the minimum wage on their own?**

No, I believe that Philadelphia should be able to set its own minimum wage.

- 4) Do you support privatization of retail liquor sales in Pennsylvania? Are there any other services that you believe should be considered for privatization?**

No, I do not support the privatization of liquor sales in PA or any other major business sectors that are currently under state jurisdiction. This would cost thousands of good, union jobs and would put a long term strain on our state's economy.

- 5) Philadelphia remains the most impoverished major city and about 75% of our residents lack bachelor's degrees. What policies would you implement to ensure that decent, high-paying jobs created here are accessible to the majority of our population, not just the relatively well-educated and already well off?**

As a lifelong Philadelphian, I feel like our city being the poorest big city should keep legislators up at night working on solutions to lift up our residents. I believe that educational opportunity is the most critical factor in expanding our city's job opportunities and career advancement. Pennsylvania is consistently ranked as one of the worst for educational equity for low-income, non-White students. Fighting to ensure our students get a fair funding formula so kids can get a quality education regardless of the zip code they were born in and working to detoxify our schools so students can learn in a healthy environment should be the bare minimum from our legislators.

## **XI. Reforming Legislative Districts**

- 1) Do you support legislation that would (1) form an independent commission, and (2) apply sound methodologies, to draw all congressional, State House, and Senate districts fairly in Pennsylvania?**

Yes. Voters should choose their legislators, not the other way around.

## **XII. Public Health**

- 1) Would you support state legislation to create a single-payer system in PA?**

I absolutely support, and will be a strong advocate in Harrisburg for, a single-payer healthcare plan. Pennsylvania should be a leader on single-payer health care legislation, not lag behind other states. As a nurse, I have seen firsthand the effects of what happens when people cannot afford adequate care.

I will be a legislator in Harrisburg that will not only sponsor Medicare for All, but also will do the legwork with other legislators to get cosponsors, and will work with stakeholders to move this

legislation forward in our Commonwealth. Unlike my opponent who takes PAC money from the corporate hospital association and from insurance companies, I will have no conflicts in ensuring the needs of our patients and healthcare workers are put over profits.

I will also advocate for including expansion of Medicaid by lowering the eligibility threshold, increasing CHIP funding, regulating drug prices, and investing in community hospitals as well as community health and preventative care. Furthermore, many patients – in my district and statewide – struggle with the high cost of prescription drugs, including high copays on medication like insulin and other diabetes medication. I will support efforts to flex our Commonwealth's legislative muscle to negotiate lower prescription drug rates.

**2) How would you reduce or eliminate the racial disparities in the provision of health care, in particular the distribution of lifesaving COVID vaccines and medications?**

I believe we need nurses in leadership positions in our government to ensure equitable access to healthcare. I have been a leader in providing lifesaving COVID vaccinations are equitably distributed in the community, including creating a local and national model for ensuring access to the vaccine for homebound residents that I presented at a White House/CDC forum. I still continue the angel dose vaccine program, despite a busy campaign schedule and maintaining a full load of close to 1,000 patients at the Abbottsford Falls Health Center. As the first person of color to be President of PSNA, I helped recruit candidates so we could double the number of people of color on our board and I tripled the number of people of color on our committees so that our organization could have a better perspective on the extent of racial disparities in our healthcare system so we could help address them.

Racial disparities are often exacerbated when people can not access affordable healthcare. I will be a lead sponsor on the state's *Medicare for All* bill which will help ensure all can access quality healthcare regardless of their ability to pay. I will work with healthcare access stakeholders to improve the Medicare for All bill and will work to get co-sponsors on the bill, in contrast to the incumbent who has not introduced this bill since 2017, and has previously refused to reintroduce the bill unless advocates could find a Republican co-sponsor for M4A.

#### **XIV. Housing**

**1) How would you deal with the growing affordable housing gap in PA, both in the homeownership and rental markets?**

Every person deserves a place to call home. In the 194th district, our community is being increasingly threatened by unchecked development that places money into the hands of big developers over individuals. As a nurse who has given nearly 800 vaccines to patients with disabilities in their homes, I've talked to many neighbors who feel the increased, unchecked development is pushing them out. Dwindling affordable housing options also make affordable housing increasingly out of reach for many working-class people. If elected, I plan to work to regulate development both in my district and for all Pennsylvanians. This means promoting the investment in both accessible and affordable housing. I would also oppose exclusionary zoning practices and tax abatements that do not favor current residents, do not bring any new tax revenue into the city, or bring back revenue to our communities or schools. I would also fight to

increase the protections for renters, who are extremely vulnerable to the high cost of living increases in Philadelphia and beyond, through fighting to establish statewide rent stabilization.

**2) Would you support a mandate requiring landlords to show good cause for evictions?**

Yes.